

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA, EASTERN DIVISION

Dr. Prabhakar Kavipurapu,
Plaintiff,

v.

Southern California Permanente Medical Group (SCPMG),
Defendant.

Case No.: 5:25-cv-00435

COMPLAINT FOR AGE DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT

INTRODUCTION

1. Plaintiff Dr. Prabhakar Kavipurapu brings this action against Defendant Southern California Permanente Medical Group (SCPMG) for violations of the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA), 29 U.S.C. § 623, and seeks injunctive relief, damages, and attorneys' fees. This case was initially filed with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), charge 480-2024-02183, wherein the EEOC issued a right to sue notification.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

2. This Court has subject matter jurisdiction under 28 U.S.C. § 1331 (federal question) as this action arises under the ADEA, 29 U.S.C. § 621, et seq.

3. Venue is proper under 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b) as Defendant operates in this judicial district, and the events giving rise to this lawsuit occurred within this district.

PARTIES

4. Plaintiff Dr. Prabhakar Kavipurapu is an individual residing in California.

5. Defendant SCPMG is a medical group providing healthcare services in California and is subject to the provisions of the ADEA as it employs more than 20 individuals.

FACTUAL BACKGROUND

6. Dr. Kavipurapu was born on August 5, 1945, making him 77 years old at the time of his employment at SCPMG.

7. He began working as a per-diem Urgent Care physician on May 9, 2023, and remained employed until his termination on February 28, 2024.

8. SCPMG limits hiring physicians over the age of 65 for full-time employment, regardless of their competency or ability to practice medicine.

9. Despite his request to seek full-time employment, Dr. Kavipurapu was informed by Kaiser recruiters Mr. Michael V. Troung and Mr. Quan Nguyen on 11/9/2022, that he would not be considered for full-time employment with benefits due to his age despite being qualified. Dr. Kavipurapu was further informed by these two recruiters he would not be eligible for any associate or other full-time position or promotion in SCPMG, again based on his age. This information was subsequently confirmed by Dr. Frances Tran and Urgent Care Chief, Dr. Stephen Turay during their interview with Dr. Kavipurapu on January 12, 2023.

10. Beginning on September 28, 2023, Dr. Kavipurapu experienced harassment from his supervising physician, Dr. Frances Tran, who claimed, without providing proof, that:

a. His patient satisfaction scores were low.

b. He took excessive time in patient care and discharge, and did not meet the company set goals in these areas.

11. Despite repeated requests for evidence, SCPMG failed to provide any proof of these allegations to Dr. Kavipurapu.

12. Dr. Kavipurapu refuted these claims by presenting emails stating that:

a. >90% of the patients seen by him expressed happiness and satisfaction for his services in-person during their visits with him.

b. He not only met but exceeded set goals in number of patients seen and discharged timely within the shift.

13. SCPMG and Dr. Tran hired younger physicians and mid-level providers into full-time positions despite their lesser qualifications and much lesser clinical experience.

14. SCPMG's actions clearly indicate age-based discrimination, culminating in his wrongful termination on February 28, 2024, to replace him with younger full-time physicians.

CAUSES OF ACTION

Count I – Violation of the Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) (29 U.S.C. § 623)

15. Plaintiff incorporates all preceding paragraphs.

16. Defendant SCPMG has engaged in a pattern of age discrimination by:

a. Denying full-time employment with benefits to physicians over age 65.

b. Targeting Plaintiff with unfounded allegations and harassment, with the intention to terminate Plaintiff on the basis of age.

c. Terminating Plaintiff's employment to favor of hiring younger, less qualified employees.

17. These actions violate 29 U.S.C. § 623(a)(1), which prohibits discrimination against individuals 40 years or older in hiring, termination, and employment conditions.

PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff requests the following relief:

1. A declaratory judgment that Defendant's policies and practices violate the ADEA.
2. A permanent injunction requiring SCPMG to:
 - a. Amend its bylaws to allow physicians over 65 to seek full-time employment with benefits, and that in practice, these bylaws are adhered.
 - b. Cease all age-based discriminatory practices.
3. Reinstatement of Plaintiff to a full-time position OR front pay in lieu of reinstatement.
4. Back pay and lost benefits.
5. Compensatory and liquidated damages as applicable.
6. Attorneys' fees and costs.
7. Any other relief deemed just and proper.

Dated: February 15, 2025

Respectfully submitted,

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